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ABSTRACT

A staff analysis by the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges is provided of a report and recommendations from the Task Force on Academic Quality entitled, "Remediation in the California Community Colleges: Proposals for Board Policies and Actions." In part I, background material examines the origin of the Task Force report as a response to the recommendations made in "Promises to Keep: Remediation in California's Public Colleges and Universities." Part II presents a summary of the major proposals from the Task Force Report. Part III describes the extent of need for remediation among California adults. Part IV contains the staff recommendations to the Board, including proposals that the Board: (1) adopt as policy a uniform definition of remediation which would disallow the awarding for degree credit for remedial courses and result in modifications to the Course Classification System; and (2) give priority in matriculation funding to colleges agreeing to participate in a state evaluation of remedial instruction. Finally, part V discusses intersegmental issues in the provision of remediation including ways to improve high school preparation, interface with state universities, and delineate responsibility with adult schools. This section also includes the recommendation that the Board develop an initiative for a coherent public policy regarding the provision of remediation to meet the needs of skill-deficient adults in California. (Author/HB)

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Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges
April 18-19, 1985

Item 2

Title: Remediation: Proposals for Board Policies and Actions

Staff Presentation: Ronnald W. Farland, Administrator
Special Projects

Summary

In January 1985 the Chancellor shared with the Board a report from the Task Force on Academic Quality called "Remediation in the California Community Colleges: Proposals for Board Policies and Actions." This item is a staff analysis of the issues addressed in that report. In addition to an opening "Background" section, it contains:

1. In Part II, a summary of the major proposals from the Task Force report;

2. In Part III, information which describes the extent of need for remediation among California adults;

3. In Part IV, recommended Board actions, based on Task Force proposals, including:

   a) a proposal that the Board adopt as policy a uniform definition of remediation for the California Community Colleges which would, among other things, disallow the awarding of degree credit for remedial courses and result in modifications to the Course Classification System; and

   b) a proposal to give priority in matriculation funding to colleges that agree to participate in a state evaluation of remedial instruction;

4. In Part V, a discussion of intersegmental issues in the provision of remediation and a proposal that the Board direct the Chancellor to develop and present to the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity an initiative to develop and implement coherent public policy regarding the provision of remediation to meet the needs of skill-deficient adults in California.

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I. BACKGROUND

> *"Underpreparedness in the college bound or for others is not, nor has it ever been, a temporary problem which will someday disappear if one just waits long enough. It is, instead, a problem of enormous magnitude and complexity in need of long-range solutions rather than short-term holding actions."*[1]

The phenomenon of providing extensive remediation in postsecondary education has been a long time in the making and is the product of many societal forces. While colleges in all segments of California have increasingly grappled with how to deal with the underprepared for nearly two decades, the types and extent of issues they have faced, as well as the cost of it all, were focused and raised to public policy prominence in January 1983 with the publication by the California Postsecondary Education Commission of Promises to Keep: Remediation in California's Public Colleges and Universities. Three months later, in April 1983, the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges appointed the Task Force on Academic Quality and charged it, among other things, to develop responses to the recommendations in Promises to Keep and, in the process, to develop proposals for the Board to consider regarding the provision of remediation in community colleges in the future. In January 1985 the Task Force submitted its report to the Chancellor who, in turn, shared the report with the Board and distributed it widely among community college constituents for review and comment (Appendix A is the Task Force report). Over the past two months, staff has reviewed and discussed the Task Force report and the field comments. Staff presents in this item some additional comment on the report as well as a set of recommended Board actions which it believes resolve the most urgent issues concerning the provision of remediation in the colleges.

In addition, the item contains another recommendation that the Board direct the Chancellor to introduce a major initiative, through the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity, that would aim, in the long run, not only to resolve additional issues of remediation as they pertain to community colleges, but also to set a policy framework in which all segments of education may participate in determining how best to provide in the future the amount and type of remediation for all California adults who need it.

II. THE TASK FORCE REPORT

As noted above, the initial charge to the Task Force in the area of remediation focused upon the need to respond to recommendations contained in Promises to Keep. Because that study did identify most of the major

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1. California Postsecondary Education Commission, Promises to Keep: Remedial Education in California's Public Colleges and Universities. Sacramento, January, 1983. pp. 75-98.

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issues related to providing remediation in higher education, the Task Force report does, in the view of staff, address the scope of considerations that should be made by the Board. For example, the Task Force report addresses and makes recommendations concerning:

1. the need to join with the University and State University in improving articulation with high schools and setting clearer expectations regarding the knowledge and skills that college-bound graduates should possess;

2. the need to discontinue awarding associate or baccalaureate degree credit for remedial coursework;

3. the need to systematically evaluate remedial courses;

4. the need to establish comprehensive assessment/placement, advising and follow-up programs (i.e., matriculation) to ensure adequate progress of remedial students; and

5. the need to conduct a careful comparative evaluation of remediation in community colleges and adult schools in order to ascertain not only whether an "academic [skills] floor" should be established to delineate their roles, but also whether there are or should be differences in the purposes for or methods by which they provide remediation.

In addition, the Task Force report goes beyond responding to Promises to Keep in also:

1. positing a uniform definition of remediation that it believes is appropriate for community colleges; and

2. declaring the purpose for providing remediation in community colleges as being "...to bring students to skill levels which enable them to perform successfully in college-level degree and certificate courses."

In all of these areas, the recommended actions proposed by staff in this item are consistent with the proposals of the Task Force. However, with respect to another set of recommendations from Promises to Keep -- that is, those having to do with defining uniformly just how much and what type of remediation should be provided by each of the segments -- the Task Force and the staff take exception and offer an alternative approach to resolving the segmental role delineation issue.

In essence, Promises to Keep argued, concerning segmental roles, that:

1. The University and State University should, over five years, significantly reduce their remedial enrollments and offerings to that low level which is and always has been necessary even for their selected students. To the extent that accomplishing that reduction requires it, they should establish cooperative arrangements with community colleges to meet the UC and CSU needs, because;

2. Community colleges should be regarded in State policy as the "primary postsecondary provider" of remediation in California. However, even community colleges should not assume responsibility for remediating the full range of skill deficiencies among California adults. Therefore;

3. The Board of Governors should, "within a reasonable period of time" (emphasis added), establish an academic [skills] floor below which instruction would not be offered, and should require that colleges redirect students below this level to the adult basic education program in their locales.

The report of the Task Force on Academic Quality does include responses to the specific recommendations internal to this general argument; but it also:

1. takes strong exception to several points internal to the argument (e.g. that community colleges should be "assigned," collectively, to meet UC's and CSU's needs, or that there is currently sufficient evidence or justification for establishing a uniform "academic floor"); and

2. makes clear that it objects in general to the implicit assumption in Promises to Keep that it is appropriate or necessary to define from the state level what amount, type or level of remediation should be provided by institutions in each segment on a uniform, statewide basis.

Therefore, it also presents what is referred to as the "preferred Task Force approach" to delineating institutional roles in meeting the remediation needs of California adults. Staff endorses this alternative approach and, in Part V of this item, recommends it as the basis for a Chancellor's initiative to be presented to the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity. Before elaborating that approach, however, Part III presents some information that portrays the extent of need for remediation and Part IV presents other staff recommendations, based on Task Force proposals, which will resolve many of the most urgent issues related to remediation, whether or not the initiative is pursued.

III. THE NEED FOR REMEDIATION

The dramatic increase over the past two decades in the need to remediate the skills deficiencies of adults is a national phenomenon, by no means unique to California; and both Promises to Keep and the report of the Task Force on Academic Quality make clear that resolution of the "issue" of remediation in all segments of education cannot be accomplished by merely identifying and eradicating remedial offerings in the interest of keeping the colleges "pure." As the Task Force report indicates:

> "[Remediation] exists because the need for it is real. It is a fact that one of every five adult Americans lacks the

> reading, writing and computational skills to handle the minimal demands of daily living, and an additional one of every three can function, but not proficiently. In part, these startling statistics are due to the decline of reading, writing and computational competencies among recent high school graduates. As a result of public concern and recent legislative actions to improve standards in the public schools, it is reasonable to expect that high school curricula and student competencies will be strengthened over time, resulting eventually in less need for colleges to provide remediation for this part of the population.

This is a particularly important hope for the University and State University, which draw the vast majority of their students from among recent high school graduates in the top 1/8 and 1/3 of their classes, respectively. But, as Promises to Keep points out, community colleges are not in the same position with respect to depending on what the high school reforms might bring.

> Because the Community Colleges must accept "any high school graduate and any other person over eighteen years of age...capable of profiting from the instruction offered," then what is remedial at the Community College must differ from what is remedial at the four-year segments who are instructed to accept students within a certain percentile of their graduating classes... For example, the survey results as well as the site visits indicate that intermediate algebra may be too high a level to be considered remedial in the Community Colleges, and the figures regarding remedial mathematics instruction must thus be adjusted downward.

Further, the Task Force report argues:

> "...the continuing influx of re-entry persons shows no signs of abating, and this population, because of time lapses in their educational experience, often demonstrates need for strenghtening basic skills through remediation. In addition, adult refugee and other in-migration populations continue to grow, and they also seek necessary language and computational skills.

"Re-entry persons," it must be remembered, does not refer only to former high school graduates with rusty skills or displaced workers or homemakers seeking re-training or new careers. Rather it includes, potentially, the very high percentage of persons who in recent years have dropped out of high school, many of whom eventually return for education to qualify for employment. According to studies reviewed by the Board in January, this population includes disproportionately high numbers of Black and Hispanic persons.

Again, the Task Force Report:

> "In 1980-81 in the California Community Colleges, enrollments in remedial reading and writing courses comprised 45 percent of all English enrollments, and enrollments in remedial mathematics courses comprised 57 percent of all mathematics enrollments, not to mention the myriad of other remedial instruction and support services which are made available to students in other discipline areas or in a non-instructional mode. The cost of remediation in that year, according to what the Commission report cautions was a conservative estimate, was $66.3 million."

Although complete data are not available to ascertain precisely what has occurred regarding these figures in the four intervening years, a recently-released report from the Learning Assessment and Retention Consortium (LARC), based on a non-random sample of colleges, indicates that:

- enrollments in remedial reading and English as a Second Language continue to increase;

- enrollments in remedial writing increased through 1982 and leveled off in 1983;

- enrollments in lower levels of math (including elementary and intermediate algebra) have remained steady throughout the period.

Evidence in that same LARC report suggests, moreover, that as more colleges implement systematic assessment and course placement procedures there may be yet another upsurge in remedial enrollments as a result of more accurately identifying the level of need. The report indicates that:

- 87% of the reporting colleges said that over 1/2 of the students tested in Fall 1983 were ineligible for placement in English 1A level writing courses;

- 72% of the reporting colleges said that over 1/2 of the students tested were inelgible for placement at or above intermediate algebra level in mathematics;

- 59% of the reporting colleges said that over 1/2 of the students tested were ineligible for courses requiring college level reading.

All of this evidence suggests that all segments of education in California, and especially the community colleges and adult schools, can expect to face, in the decade ahead, the challenge of students who are underprepared for college work and who are in need of remediation. The questions are: 1) how to provide it efficiently and most effectively and, 2) in the case of the colleges, how to accommodate its provision without sacrificing standards in collegiate level academic and vocational programs.

IV. PROPOSALS FOR BOARD POLICIES AND ACTIONS

As noted earlier, the Task Force report addresses a number of important issues regarding remediation and offers proposals for resolving them. This section reviews the proposals of the Task Force and presents recommendations for Board action regarding them.

Defining Remediation

The Task Force report reads:

> In its earliest discussions of its charge, the Task Force's Sub-committee on Remediation recognized that before it could take up the several policy issues that had been raised, it would first need to come to grips with two basic questions. They are:
>
> 1. What is remediation in the community college context? and
>
> 2. For what purpose or purposes might remediation be provided in community colleges?

In its work on delineating appropriate standards for associate degree applicable courses (see Item 1 in today's Board agenda) the Task Force had already determined what is not remediation, in terms of levels of the curriculum, by declaring the following to be applicable to the Associate degree:

1) English courses not more than one level below English 1A; and

2) Mathematics courses above and including Elementary Algebra.

By definition, then, language and computational skills courses below those levels would be remedial.

In the remediation report, though, the Task Force considered additional dimensions of the definitional issue which it felt were important for understanding the role community colleges must play in meeting the needs of skill deficient adults. After critiquing the terminology and definitions employed by CPEC in Promises to Keep and by the LARC consortia, the Task Force developed its own affirmative statements about the nature and purposes of remediation in community colleges. The report emphasizes two important assumptions that were key in developing its definition that is proposed for Board adoption. Those assumptions are:

1. Remediation in community colleges is not merely instruction designed to correct deficiencies in basic language and computational skills. Rather, because the open access mission of the colleges is intended to accommodate young people and adults whose "blocks" to successful academic performance result from a variety of experiences and learning skills deficiencies,

remediation must be defined as a process which includes a variety of prescriptive interventions to remove barriers or develop learning skills. These prescriptive interventions may take many forms, including such things as instruction to correct skill deficiencies, development of general study skills, provision of tutorial assistance and specialized assessment, counseling, advisement and placement.

2. The purpose of providing remediation in community colleges is to bring students to skill levels which enable them to perform successfully in college level degree and certificate courses.

Staff concurs in these assumptions and believes that they, together with the implied definitions of remediation included in the proposed action for defining associate degree applicable courses, comprise a definition that will do much to clarify what is and is not appropriate for community colleges to provide in the way of remediation in the credit mode. It should be noted, however, that neither the assumptions nor the implied definitions in the associate degree course action deal adequately with how to classify courses in English as a Second Language. The remediation report of the Task Force makes the following statement:

> English as a Second Language should not be classed categorically as remedial. ESL, while it may be taught at a remedial level if the students are deficient in skills in their native languages or if they have learning problems, may also be taught at the associate or baccalaureate level. For example, colleges in all segments offer an ESL course which receives credit as English 1A. Course content, criteria and evaluation are identical to the regular English 1A. The only significant differences are that this course is recommended for students whose primary language is other than English and instructors of these courses are trained to recognize special problems faced by these students, such as the use of idioms or misinterpretations brought about by literal translations.

In keeping with this statement, staff endorses the Task Force proposal that the Board should adopt a definition of remediation applicable to all colleges; but staff's recommendation expands the proposal of the Task Force by incorporating into the definition language that states, in terms of curriculum structure, what is and is not remedial, including language that will eventually make it possible to determine more precisely which courses in English as a Second Language are and are not remedial. In addition, the staff recommendation proposes that this uniform definition be used to modify the Course Classification System so that data on remediation will, in the future, be more accurate. Finally, it should be noted that the definition's declaration that the purpose of providing remediation in the credit mode in community colleges is "to assist students to attain those learning skills necessary to succeed in college

transfer, certificate or degree courses" focuses considerably what is the colleges' role.

Recommendation 1: The Board of Governors should approve the definition of remediation below and direct staff to propose modifications to the Course Classification System and other necessary amendments to Title 5 that are consistent with the definition.

> *Remediation is that process which is designed to assist students to attain those learning skills necessary to succeed in college transfer, certificate or degree courses and programs, and includes classroom instruction as well as other support services interventions to assist students in the pursuit of their educational goals and objectives. Remedial instruction includes courses designed to develop reading or writing skills at or below the level required for enrollment in English courses one level below English 1A, mathematics courses below Elementary Algebra and English as a Second Language courses consistent with the levels defined for English.*

Recommendation 2: The Board should direct staff, in consultation with the Chancellor's Task Force on ESL and the colleges generally, to develop guidelines for determining what levels of ESL are equivalent to the standards applied in English for determining what is and is not remedial.

Remediation and Credit

During the period when enrollments in remedial offerings were expanding, campuses in each of the public segments awarded credit for the work and, in some cases, that credit was applicable to degrees. In 1980 the State University was authorized to grant "workload credit" for such courses. This made it possible for that segment to continue to receive state funds for support of the courses and permitted its campuses to count the units in the "workload" of students for purposes of eligibility for financial aid and participation in activities but not count it toward the degree.

Among community colleges, practice varies greatly. A few districts, including at least one which has responsibility for adult education in its area, offer all remediation in the noncredit mode and at the lower rate per ADA. Most districts offer some remediation in the credit mode and some in the noncredit mode, but the amount, level and type in each category (and the rationales for placing it) in each vary greatly. Further, among those that offer remediation in the credit mode, a majority currently permit some limited number of units to be applied to the associate degree. According to Promises to Keep, a few districts even certify remedial courses for transfer to the State University, probably because some State University campuses themselves offer comparable courses for credit.

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This wide variation in practice results largely from the fact that there has been no uniform definition of what is and is not remedial.

If the Board approves the proposed amendments to Title 5 contained in the agenda item "Proposals for Strengthening the Associate Degree" (see today's agenda item 1) and adopts as policy the definition proposed above, colleges will all be working with the same definition. They will still have the option of offering remediation in either the noncredit or credit mode, but if they offer it in the credit mode:

1. the credit would not be applicable to the associate degree or certifiable for transfer; and

2. the course would have to meet all of the standards and criteria for a credit course that is not applicable to the degree (i.e., Title 5, Section 55002(b)).

In its report "Proposals for Strengthening the Associate Degree," the Task Force on Academic Quality sets out four reasons why colleges might choose the option of offering some levels of remediation in the credit mode, especially when the purpose of the course is to "bring students to skils levels which enable them to perform successfully in college level degree and certificate courses."

> First, enrollment in a credit course requires that grades be given and that academic progress be monitored, whereas noncredit enrollment does not. Monitoring results in an improved opportunity to assist students through academic difficulties as well as to place them on probation or dismiss them if that is appropriate. Second, teaching in the credit mode, including remediation, already legally requires a higher level of rigor in course conduct than is true of noncredit courses. The additional regulatory clarification proposed in this report would further assure that the awarding of credit for remediation is justified. Third, the open access policy in community colleges enables many students to enroll who have degree, certificate or transfer objectives, but who, at entrance, lack the basic language and computational skills to succeed in degree-applicable courses. For such students, remedial courses are the essential first step in completing an educational goal. Finally, these same students often need financial aid, or veteran or social security benefits to attend college; and, since noncredit courses do not normally qualify a student for such benefits, many would not be able to avail themselves of postsecondary opportunities.

Evaluating Remedial Courses

The study reported in Promises to Keep found that efforts to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of remedial offerings were almost non-

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existent in any of the segments of higher education, and the report contained a recommendation that each segment develop a "rigorous program evaluation model for remedial courses and services." The report of the Task Force on Academic Quality chronicles a number of events and activities that have already occurred in the past year to encourage more systematic evaluation of remediation, culminating in the award this year, by CPEC, of small federal grants to five community colleges to develop model evaluation procedures. Staff plans to use the resulting models as a basis for work with all colleges in Fall 1985 and will expect them to begin or expand their evaluation efforts during the 1985-86 academic year. By Fall 1986 all colleges should have implemented a rigorous evaluation process, and by Spring 1987 the Chancellor should be able to provide CPEC with a descriptive summary of the evaluation processes being used in the colleges and at least preliminary outcomes from a sample of colleges.

These types of evaluation processes should be on-going, routine aspects of what colleges do to improve the effectiveness of their individual courses and programs. As such, they need to be flexible and adaptive to the individual campuses and programs. Collectively, of course, the results of such evaluations will be useful for addressing major public policy questions about remediation, such as whether it is feasible to expect that students reading at the 6th grade level can be prepared to do college level work within a reasonable period of time. But that should not be the chief purposes for which colleges are encouraged to improve their evaluation processes. Still, such public policy issues do need to be addressed systematically. In order to do so, a significant number of colleges must have the capacity and resources first to assess and place students into appropriate level remedial courses and then to monitor their progress through various levels of remediation into and through college level programs. Implementation of a full matriculation process, as set forth in the Student Matriculation Plan adopted by the Board last year, would provide that capacity. Therefore, staff proposes the following Board action:

Recommendation 3: The Board should continue to seek legislation to authorize the implementation, funding and evaluation of matriculation and give priority in funding to colleges that agree to participate in a state-level evaluation of matriculation which includes evaluation of remedial courses.

The actions proposed above together constitute a major step in resolving public policy concerns about remediation at the postsecondary level. The uniform definition will not only permit in the future more accurate analysis of enrollments and costs, but will, more importantly, delineate the remedial and degree granting functions so that high standards can be maintained in degree courses and programs. Additionally, the commitment to evaluating remedial courses will, in a fairly short time period, enable colleges and public policy makers to determine what amounts, levels and types of remediation are reasonable for colleges to provide. Still, the existing and projected extent of need for remediation of adults in California necessarily raises public policy questions about the

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roles and relationships that should exist among the segments of education to meet that need. The following section addresses those questions.

V. SEGMENTAL ROLES IN PROVIDING REMEDIATION

As indicated earlier in this item, as well as in the Task Force report, a significant portion of Promises to Keep was devoted to discussing and making recommendations concerning what are the appropriate roles of the public education segments in providing remediation. Staff's description of the essence of that discussion and its conclusions is included on page __ in Part II of this item. From that description, it can be seen that CPEC's approach to deriving coherent public policy concerning remediation was based on an implicit assumption that each of the segments has a definable role and that all institutions within each segment should conform its practices to that role. The Task Force on Academic Quality did provide responses to the specific recommendations that were couched in terms of that assumption. However, it presented those responses with great reluctance since its own view was that:

a) the extent and types of needs for remediation vary greatly from one locale to another throughout the state; and

b) the human and other resources needed to provide remediation also vary from institution to institution both within and across the varying regions of need.

Therefore, the Task Force also presented an alternative response which it called "the preferred Task Force approach." The report reads as follows:

> As noted earlier, the Task Force on Academic Quality would take issue with any assumption that it is necessary or appropriate to define what amount, type or level of remediation should be provided by institutions in each segment on a statewide basis. Instead, the Task Force recommends that the State should take a firm policy position that the remediation needs of its citizens will be met by its public educational institutions. It should then establish guidelines or standards for that provision and then charge the postsecondary institutions -- adult education, community colleges, CSU, and UC -- to develop delineation of function agreements on a regional basis. Regions would be defined, so far as possible, by the natural spheres of association that develop among institutions in proximity to each other, based on the commonalities of constituencies and conditions that exist in the area. Institutions in a region would be required by the State to develop delineation of function agreements to coordinate their remediation functions and assure that students have the opportunity to progress on an orderly continuum toward meeting their learning skill needs.

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The State guidelines or standards upon which the agreements would be based might include:

1. A definition of remediation which incorporates the concept of a learning continuum based upon student needs.

2. A policy that postsecondary institutions in each segment have first responsibility for providing the remedial help needed by the students they admit.

3. A requirement that remediation be provided for those who are assessed as needing it.

4. A requirement that institutions in a region agree on a procedure to ensure that students' remediation needs are met between and within institutions.

5. A requirement that agreements be developed among postsecondary institutions and high schools in a region regarding skills proficiencies needed for college success.

6. A requirement that in the interest of continually evaluating and improving the intersegmental arrangements for providing remediation, institutions in a region share assessment results and student outcome data with one another and with the appropriate state agencies.

In setting forth this regional, intersegmental approach as an alternative to the State's further delineating the roles of the segments in providing remediation, the Task Force is mindful that the Board of Governors is not in a position to implement it unilaterally. Intersegmental consensus on the basic principles of the proposal would first need to be obtained, and then much joint work would need to be done on the details of implementation. Given the existing governance distinctions among the segments, varying geographic dispersion of institutions in each segment, and the long-standing traditions of each in providing remediation, achieving such consensus is no small challenge. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that the proposal has the advantage of allowing for local variations in need and institutional capability, and encouraging communication and cooperation among the segments, rather than preserving or defining separate educational islands, each with its own parochial interests. Perhaps more important, it encourages segmental and institutional responses which are based on students' needs and, thereby, reduces students' chances of getting lost in the system.

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Therefore, the Task Force proposes that the Chancellor seek Board approval to develop and present a proposal to the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity to pursue its recommendation for an intersegmental approach to providing remediation in California public education.

Staff concurs in this Task Force view, and proposes that it be the basis for a major initiative which the Chancellor would present to the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity. Since the Roundtable includes the chief executive officers of the three higher education segments as well as the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who has responsibility for both high schools and adult schools, such an initiative could not only result in long term reslution of the segmental roles issue, but also provide a framework for addressing more specific issues raised in the Task Force report which are intersegmental in nature. Among those issues are the following:

1. Improving High School Preparation: As suggested earlier, a significant factor in the expansion of remediation in the postsecondary segments has been the need to respond to the steadily declining skill level; of recent high school graduates. All segments of postsecondary education have experienced the impact of that decline; and while the University and State University are more likely than the community colleges and adult schools to benefit in the short-run from improvements of preparation in the high schools, all segments should participate jointly in efforts to bring about those improvements. A number of ways have been suggested for colleges and universities to stimulate and supplement efforts by the high schools to improve standards for student preparation with the intent of diminishing the need for remediation in the postsecondary segments. Among them are:

   a) assist high schools in defining standards for college preparatory courses and provide to the high schools clear statements of the competencies and educational background expected for entrance to college;

   b) provide staff development for high school teachers through participation in intersegmental projects (such as the California Writing Project) and through more regularized exchanges among faculty of the various disciplines;

   c) provide feedback to high schools on the assessed skill levels and academic performance of their students; and

   d) cooperate in the development and administration of diagnostic assessment tests so that high school students can be assured of consistent expectations between high schools and colleges and thus be encouraged to obtain necessary skills before entering college.

As the Task Force report makes clear, examples of each of these types of cooperation between colleges and high schools may be found

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around the state. But if they are to have a significant effect in diminishing the need for remediation, they will need to be greatly expanded.

2. Interface with the University and State University: As noted, significant improvement in high school preparation is most likely, in the short-run, to benefit the University and State University, since those segments select their students from among high school graduates based largely upon prior academic performance. In the meantime, however, those two segments continue to be faced with significant numbers of students who cannot perform successfully in college courses without remediation. Since, theoretically, these segments' admission standards should keep them from having to provide remediation, they are under considerable public pressure to reduce their enrollments in that area. Promises to Keep recommended that the University and State University develop five-year plans for reducing their remedial enrollments. In its response, the University of California said:

> *"Experiments underway in cooperating with community colleges will be evaluated and extended where warranted; but it remains fundamentally the University's responsibility to help its students correct weaknesses in their academic preparation. The University must retain sufficient control over the remedial instruction needed to bring entering students up to its standards in order to guarantee that those standards remain at their current high level. As entering students' academic preparation improves, remedial instruction can be reduced accordingly."*

In contrast, however, the State University Trustees recently approved a plan to reduce its remedial enrollments by 75% over the coming five years. That reduction apparently is projected on the main premise that improvement in the preparation of high school graduates, together with new CSU subject matter admission requirements, will result in fewer underprepared enrollees. However, the plan also indicates that to the extent the planned level of reduction cannot occur on those grounds, CSU campuses will seek to expand cooperative arrangements wherein community colleges provide for concurrent enrollment of students and teach remedial courses on the CSU campus (emphasis added). The CSU plan does acknowledge some of the drawbacks for and constraints on community colleges in making such joint arrangements. But the action of the Trustees is, nonetheless, troubling to community college constituents because it exemplifies the kinds of actions that can be taken when there is an absence of clear state policy regarding remediation and no obvious mechanisms for resolving intersegmental concerns about its provision.

3. Delineation with Adult Schools: The "Academic Floor" Issue: As noted earlier, Promises to Keep contained a recommendation:

> That the California Community Colleges continue to be considered in the long term as the primary postsec-

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> ondary provider of remedial courses and services in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language in the State in addition to their academic, vocational, and community service functions.

At the same time, however, it recommended:

> That the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges establish an academic floor below which instruction would not be offered. That they redirect students below this level to the adult basic education program operated either by the local community college or school district. A reasonable period of time should be allowed before this floor is instituted.

Community colleges already are, of course, the "primary postsecondary provider" of remediation in California. Nevertheless, given the previously stated preference for determining institutional roles on a regional, intersegmental basis (as opposed to segmental roles on a statewide basis) and given that the community college mission is currently under legislative review, staff does not recommend that the Board take any action at this time to affirm a particular role for community colleges as a segment. At the same time, there is need to carefully and comprehensively examine the existing potential relationships between community colleges and adult schools in providing remediation for adults because there is currently insufficient evidence to determine whether CPEC's academic floor proposal is either necessary or feasible. The Task Force report reads as follows on the subject:

> Existing law gives first responsibility for the provision of what has been known as "adult basic education" to adult schools. By local agreement, adult schools may exist under the auspices of either high school districts or community college districts; but, in either case, the rate of state ADA support is significantly lower than for credit offerings in community colleges.
>
> The Task Force commends CPEC for acknowleding that implementation of a "floor," if it is appropriate at all, will require time for careful deliberation. The Task Force believes that the following preliminary steps must be accomplished before taking any public policy action to implement a floor (or floors) in community colleges.
>
> 1. Comprehensive assessment, advisement, placement and student follow-up processes must be established in all (or nearly all) community colleges in order to provide baseline data regarding the extent and types of remediation needs exhibited

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by students who enroll. Implementation of matriculation in the colleges will provide this capacity.

2. An intensive effort must be mounted to evaluate the effectiveness of remediation in the colleges, utilizing baseline data gathered in assessment programs. Though such an effort should be coordinated statewide, it should allow for individual college variations in tests as well as variations in other evaluation components or methodologies utilized. The evaluation processes developed by the colleges during 1984-86 and the methodologies employed in the matriculation evaluation would be the bases for the effort.

3. At least two full years of longitudinal data on student progress through remedial programs in a majority of the colleges should be available before considering whether an academic floor or floors should be established for community colleges.

4. In the meantime, a careful comparative study should be made of remedial offerings in community colleges and adult basic education courses in adult schools.

Staff proposes that each of the issues raised in relation to the other segments of education would be addressed most effectively in the context of a mechanism that not only involves all the segments but that also recognizes that individual educational institutions, given clear but broad state policy direction, are in the best position to determine what they can and ought to provide in the way of remediation. Therefore, staff proposes that the Board adopt the following recommended action:

Recommendation 4: The Board of Governors should direct the Chancellor to develop and present to the Roundtable on Educational Opportunity a major initiative for establishing coherent public policy regarding the provision of remedial instruction and services to meet the needs of skill deficient adults in California. The initiative should include, but not be limited to, proposals to:

1. *jointly develop proposed state policy for providing remediation and mechanisms to implement it on a regional intersegmental basis;*

2. *conduct a joint, comparative study of remediation in community colleges and adult schools and use the results as a basis for reviewing and, as necessary, amending state policy;*

3. *establish an intersegmental work group, including the State Department of Education, to identify and review assessment and diagnostic*

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testing practices in the schools and colleges and make recommendations to the Roundtable regarding how to improve effectiveness, efficiency and coordination; and

4. *expand the functions and funding of the California Articulation Council to include not only the development of articulation agreements in discipline areas, but also the promulgation of such agreements through the conduct of regional, intersegmental workshops by discipline; and*

5. *seek increased funding for the California Academic Partnership Program to support expanded, intersegmental efforts to improve high school preparation and articulation of high school and college curricula.*

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